

Comment	Board, Committee, Commission	Meeting Date	Comment ID	Responses provided by Ad-hoc Committee unless specified in <i>italics</i>
Most towns that have a DPW also have a sewer system. So why would we have a DPW?	Board of Health	12/14/2009	5007	The decision to create a department will be discussed during this process but it is not a definite part of the plan. There are some towns without water or sewer that have a consolidated public works operation. Westford could benefit from consolidation of some public works related services without the creation of a public works department.
Is it simply combining Highway, Water, and some functions from the School Department?	Board of Health	12/14/2009	5008	This is a possible outcome of this process but functions will not be combined without a thorough cost benefit analysis. The functions will not be combined just for the sake of consolidation.
What are the reasons other towns formed a DPW?	Cemetery Commission	12/16/2009	5061	Some towns saw the formation of a consolidated DPW as way to reduce redundancy and better utilize existing resources. For example Belmont had a cemetery department that did no other work during the slow winter months and this was an inefficient use of resources. They consolidated under one division to allow a director to utilize all resources in the best interest of the community. This type of problem is not occurring in Westford.
Where are the statistics from other towns showing, before and after spending and savings? Need answers to these questions first.	Cemetery Commission	12/16/2009	5062	<i>under consideration</i>
Can this be achieved without a DPW?	Cemetery Commission	12/16/2009	5063	Yes there are cost saving opportunities and service enhancements that can be achieved without the creation of a public works department.
How will the priorities be set in the proposed plan?	Cemetery Commission	12/16/2009	5064	It is imperative that priorities be agreed to prior to consolidation of functions or services. The best resource to set priorities would be those closest to the day-to-day operations of the Town.
Will this add more paperwork?	Cemetery Commission	12/16/2009	5065	The use of electronic systems is slowly replacing paper forms and this will continue. A goal would be to facilitate sharing of resources without adding bureaucracy.
Will this add time and delay to the process of getting needs met?	Cemetery Commission	12/16/2009	5066	This will increase accountability and create opportunities for collaboration in scheduling to potentially get things done faster.
Are we creating a level of beuaracracy=>don't we have folks who already do what we need to do?	Conservation Commission	12/16/2009	5076	We are considering the extent to which these goals can be achieved using existing staff resources.
Cons. Comm goes out side for its signage=>can highway department do signs for them?	Conservation Commission	12/16/2009	5081	Providing some services in house rather than through contractors will be weighed in a cost benefit analysis.
Does the town manager need more help? TM should pull in the reins and be very clear about reporting structure. Need more oversight out of the town manager's office.	Council on Aging	12/16/2009	5091	The Town Manager sees unrealized cost savings potential in some Town functions.
Has the DPW Task force data been reviewed?	Department Head Meeting	12/16/2009	5100	The DPW task force started at a different point in the process. The ad hoc DPW planning committee has not caught up to that point. The collected data will be reviewed at the appropriate point in the process.
how do you get public input on plan?	Department Head Meeting	12/16/2009	5101	A series of public input sessions were held as well as public discussions during 18 different board and committee meetings. See the list of committee meetings here. Soliciting resident input directly using a web based survey is under consideration.
Why is DPW the answer, why not some other new department	Energy Committee	12/14/2009	5122	Referring to this process as a DPW study is the easiest way to describe the services that are being considered. A DPW department may not be the end result of this process.
How will consildation occur as part of the DPW proposal? There are currently duplicated efforts.	Energy Committee	12/14/2009	5123	We are looking specifically at combining those functions, which will not have a significant cost to implement. The objective is to identify cost saving opportunities.

Where did this come from? "Different departments doing the same work. Every department has there own mechanic."	Highway Department	1/7/2010	5144	Consolidating fleet maintenance is not currently being considered. There have been a number of comments about the utilization of staff for mechanic services. During the department meetings this issue was discussed and there is now a better understanding of how vehicles are maintained in each department. At this time, fleet maintenance is not an area that has significant opportunities for cost savings.
How would it affect seniority? If there are lay offs, who stays and who goes? Specialized services versus who stays and who goes	Highway Department	1/7/2010	5145	Consolidating employees into one department is not part of the plan at this time. A cost/benefit analysis would need to be completed on the cost to cross train employees. There are also a number of unresolved issues regarding seniority.
Why restructure if the only problem is facilities maintenance? What is the problem to be solved?	Highway Department	1/7/2010	5151	Restructuring is not uncommon as an organization matures, new technologies are introduced and service needs and demands change. Developing a flexible and highly skilled workforce is key in successful organizations.
What is the problem? If it wasn't a problem then, why is it a problem now?	Highway Department	1/7/2010	5152	The problem is the cost to deliver the current service level. See attached table.
Shouldn't procurement be handled already by finance dept?	Highway Department	1/7/2010	5155	The Chief Procurement Officer for the town is the Town Manager.
Why is the Water Department opposed? They are the most capital intensive department	Housing Authority	12/10/2009	5176	The Water department is indeed quite capital intensive but the vast majority of personnel and physical assets are specific to water treatment and distribution only. - <i>Water Commissioner</i>
Why did the Personnel Advisory Committee oppose the DPW Director position?	Housing Authority	12/10/2009	5177	<i>under consideration</i>
Do the numbers really show the savings?	Library Department	1/8/2010	5185	Refer to question #5062 and #5081
What does the Town really need in terms of staffing	Library Department	1/8/2010	5191	<i>under consideration</i>
Do we have the work to support a full time painter, plumber, electrician?	Library Department	1/8/2010	5197	refer to question #5081
Do we just need a person to manage all facilities, and not a DPW director?	Parks and Recreation Commission	12/9/2009	5220	Hiring a Facilities Manager instead of a DPW Director only addresses cost avoidance. A DPW Director has the potential to reduce current service delivery costs through oversight and proper utilization of resources.
Why was School Dept. not included in first round DPW proposal, when it has the most facilities and a lot of vehicles?	Parks and Recreation Commission	12/9/2009	5221	The School department is included in this process.
How would "shared vehicles" handle this situation and would it lead to more time spent getting the right tools, etc. on a general purpose truck, negating the expected savings of shared vehicles?	Parks and Recreation Commission	12/9/2009	5222	refer to question # 5144
where are people slotted in new organization?	Parks and Recreation Commission	12/9/2009	5223	A comprehensive review of the organizational chart, pay classification plan, and the position descriptions is part of this process.
where are specific people savings to be generated?	Parks and Recreation Commission	12/9/2009	5224	This question is part of the study.
Do people know how many people are paid in each department?	Parks and Recreation Commission	12/9/2009	5225	Yes
Centralized Purchasing - can we implement this separately from DPW proposal?	Parks and Recreation Commission	12/9/2009	5226	Yes
Do people know how many invoices are paid by each department?	Parks and Recreation Commission	12/9/2009	5227	A review of expenses and invoices from each department is part of this process
How much and at what cost is school field maintenance equipment?	Parks, Grounds and Cemetery Department	1/7/2010	5263	<i>under consideration</i>

Union impacts?	Parks, Grounds and Cemetery Department	1/7/2010	5267	<i>under consideration</i>
Who's making deals?	Parks, Grounds and Cemetery Department	1/7/2010	5271	<i>under consideration</i>
What is going on behind closed doors?	Parks, Grounds and Cemetery Department	1/7/2010	5272	<i>under consideration</i>
Why are we doing this again when town meeting just said no once again?	Permanent Town Building Committee	12/16/2009	5274	Town Meeting did not support the creation of a DPW Director position. This is a new initiative with the objective of identifying and implementing cost savings measures in the FY11 budget.
Why would we need to hire a DPW director, can't this all be done with current staff?	Permanent Town Building Committee	12/16/2009	5275	refer to question #5076
had engineering been considered before the organizational chart had been created?	Planning Board	1/4/2010	5280	The org chart was and still is in draft form.
what will engineering's role be within the organization?	Planning Board	1/4/2010	5281	Engineering's role within the organization needs to be evaluated as it potentially offers the greatest savings as far as long-term cost avoidance. Performing more Town specific engineering in-house, rather than contracting it out, lowers capital costs to infrastructure maintenance and improvement and gives a greater degree of control over a project.
prioritization of work loads – who will make the decisions?	Planning Board	1/4/2010	5282	A qualified engineer is capable of prioritizing work to be performed.
who will engineering report to and who will supervise since now it is the Planning Board?	Planning Board	1/4/2010	5283	The Planning Board does not supervise engineering. Engineering reports to the Town Manager.
Want a better understanding from the Town Manager on how she can or cannot control spending under current organization?	Planning Board	1/4/2010	5292	<p>As Town Manager, I work closely with all Department Heads to control spending through the annual budget process. I have also used town wide hiring or spending freezes and required departments to annually bid for contracted services. In FY10, town departments reduced their operating budgets by 4.36 %.</p> <p>Although I have been successful in controlling spending, I think the town would benefit from a more focused approach to managing the public works related budgets. I do not have the time to oversee public works related spending on a daily basis because I have a number of other responsibilities in town. If public works related budgets were managed with a centralized approach it would present opportunities to reduce spending by changing the way we allocate resources on a daily basis. This coordination would enhance the cooperation and sharing that already exists between these departments.</p> <p>Consolidation of the technology budgets is a good example of how the organization benefits from a centralized approach that focuses on the needs of the entire organization rather than each individual department.</p>
Could the Water Department pay for the DPW Director instead of the Town Manager?	Water Commissioners	12/16/2009	5324	It is possible to equitably split the cost to the Water Enterprise Fund such that water takers do not pay more over head.
How will the Water Commissioners be incorporated into the the organizational plan?	Water Commissioners	12/16/2009	5325	Commissions will not be changed.
Whay aren't the schools included in the DPW?	Water Commissioners	12/16/2009	5326	refer to question #5221
Will the Water Department have to pay for the DPW Director?	Water Commissioners	12/16/2009	5327	refer to #5324
Do we know if there is a savings from joint procurement?	Water Department	1/8/2010	5331	The school department saves money of supplies as a result of a combined procurement in the Merrimack Collaborative Bids. Ecomony of scale usually leads to lower unit cost for supplies.

Is there any savings from consolidated energy or electric procurement?	Water Department	1/8/2010	5332	The town has achieved significant savings through centralized procurement of electric and oil.
if water vehicles sent to Hwy, would a water laborer be laid – off?	Water Department	1/8/2010	5336	The Water Superintendent, with approval of the Water Commissioners, would make this decision. Refer to #5144
What is the difference or significance of an MWRA town versus a non-MWRA? Why would this distinction have an affect on department consolidation"?			5392	Towns that receive pre treated MWRA water only may have a smaller staff, lower budget, and are less complex than a system with treatment. - <i>Water Commissioner</i>